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ABSTRACT

In the autumn of 1983, a study was conducted of the needs of county public health unit (CPHU) nurses in Florida for additional training in health education. Questionnaires were developed and mailed to 136 persons, with a return rate of 68 percent. Most of the respondents were white female registered nurses with a mean age of 44 years, who were graduates of three year nursing programs or community colleges. Data were collected and analyzed to yield the following conclusions: (1) health education risk reduction skills training was needed; (2) a training plan needed to be developed to include patient counseling skills, small group instruction techniques, diabetes education, nutrition education, maternal health risk reduction, child abuse, and interpersonal communication techniques; (3) district-wide conferences should be organized on domestic violence and physical fitness, nutrition, and health; and (4) health education methods training should precede other health education-risk reduction training when possible. Using these results, a training plan was developed and implemented at five training sites. Six training courses and four special interest courses were developed and taught by guest instructors at several training sites. Most of the CPHU nurses have received training, and most have rated the courses as very helpful. Changes in attitude and the application of learned skills were to be measured by the re-administration of the survey in March 1985. (KC)

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Health Education Training Needs Assessment for CPHU Nurses

by
Charles Hale & Robert C. Davis

Presented at the
Eighth Annual Institute
American Rural Health Association
Orlando, Florida
June 6, 1984

INTRODUCTION

Health education has been perceived to have a variety of definitions. Since chronic diseases are partially dependent upon lifestyle, a definition of health education suggested by Dr. Larry Green would be appropriate. Dr. Green defined health education as,

> "Any designed combination of methods to facilitate voluntary adaptations of behavior conducive to health."

The emphasis in Dr. Green's definition is on behavior change. Lifestyle may be defined in terms of personal behavior patterns. Behaviors that place one at increased risk for a disease (e.g. diabetes) or condition (e.g. accident) should be targeted for health education efforts. Thus, the intent of such health education activities would be health risk reduction.

In order to provide adequate health education-risk reduction (HE-RR) services appropriate staff skills must be present. The intent of this study was to assess nursing staff continuing education attitudes and perceived training needs.

Methodology

Between August 23, 1983 and October 7, 1983 the 16 county public health units (CPHU) of the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services' (DHRS) District 3 were mailed survey instruments. All questionnaires were to be completed anonymously. Of the 136 questionnaires sent out, 93 were returned yielding a 68.4 percent return rate. Fifteen of sixteen counties returned completed instruments. If the non-participating county was excluded from

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the study population, the return would be 85.3 percent.

Description of the Study Population

Demographic Data

All respondents were female and 90 percent were white. Ten percent were black. Eighty-two percent of respondents were nurses, 16.2 percent were nursing aides and 2.2 percent were nutritionists. Data describing respondent age and years in public health may be found in Table 1.

Table 1

Respondent Age & Years in Public Health

MCT*	Years in Public Health District III	Age District III
Mean	7.6	44.2
Standard Dev.	6.66	11.46
Median	5.3	45.3
Mode	2.0	30.0
Range	26.0	42.0

*Measure of Central Tendency

As found in Table 1, the average age of respondents was 44.2 years with a standard deviation of 11.46 years. Respondents have been employed in public health for an average of 7.6 years.

Table 2

Education Levels of Respondents

Degree	District 3
Graduate	14.4 (%)
College	27.8 (%)
Other degree or certificate	45.6 (%)
High school graduate	12.2 (%)

It would seem that many nurses received their professional training in either a nursing school or community college. Concerning the nursing certification of respondents, 84.4 percent were registered nurses, 6.7 percent were LPNs, and 8.9 percent were aides. These figures exclude the two respondents who were nutritionists.

These data suggest that respondents and by inference a majority of District 3 nursing staff were white, middle-aged, and economically middle class women.

TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Continuing Education Attitudes

While a majority of respondents (84.9 percent) felt educational skills are necessary to do public health work, a majority (57.2 percent) did not feel that pay raises should be tied to continuing education. It may be that respondents perceive the licensing process for nurses provides sufficient encouragement for continuing education and that other means of encouragement are unnecessary. In addition, a slight majority (53.3 percent) were unwilling to attend inservice training sessions unless they were fully reimbursed. (Appendix A).

Continuing Education Interests

Respondents were asked to express their interest in 50 subject areas under six headings: (1) health promotion-risk reduction, (2) cancer screening tests, (3) domestic violence, (4) technical content subjects, (5) CPHU management, and (6) selected topics. Responses were ranked, based upon degree of interest: very (4), moderate (3), some (2), or none (1).

Health Promotion. These data distributed themselves into three natural groups under the "much interest" heading. The top five subject areas were blood pressure, body weight, physical fitness, nutrition and diabetes mellitus.

These data suggested that continuing education courses encompassing these five topics would receive respondent participation. Three of the five topics, body weight, physical fitness, and nutrition are associated with generally improved health status. Emphasizing these three topics during staff training exercises may yield significant client health risk reductions. Many respondents expressed an interest in diabetes mellitus education. HELP continuing education programs should address these interest areas as a matter of priority.

The second break in data distribution occurred between 26.8 percent and 32.1 percent "much interested". Topics included in this grouping were coping skills, stress disorders, illicit drug use, OTC drug use, and smoking. If resources permit, continuing education programs should address these interest areas particularly stress coping skills and smoking.

Respondents expressed little interest in occupational illness, alcohol use, seat belt use, accident prevention, BSE and loneliness. These topics comprised the third natural data break from 16.0 to 22.5 percent much interested. (See Appendix B).

Cancer Detection Screening Tests. These tests were: pap smear, leukemia blood test, lung cancer X-ray, testes self exam, colo-rectal screening, and prostate screening. Analysis of data indicated that respondents were not interested in receiving continuing education about any of the six screening tests. Reasons may include a perceived lack of need or an already existing knowledge base. The existing knowledge base is evident in that 65 percent of respondents felt completely competent concerning the pap smear. The lack of perceived need is suggested, since almost two-thirds of respondents felt no need for the luekemia blood test, testes self-exam education, or prostate screening. HELP should encourage the development of supportive attitudes as early detection is essential to risk reduction. (See Appendix C).

Domestic Violence. This topic included child abuse, spouse abuse, and parent training. Child abuse was the only subject area of the 50 to achieve a simple majority rate of any response option. Spouse abuse was among the top six areas of interest. Since the majority of CPHU nursing clients are women and children, respondents are in a good position to look for and refer suspected cases of spouse or child abuse. Parenting skills training is essential in the control of child abuse and possibly even spouse abuse. During FY 85-86, HELP will host a District wide continuing education conference addressing the role of the CPHU in domestic violence, necessary physical assessment skills, and identification of referral resources. (See Appendix D).

Technical Content Subjects. This section contained six of the top nine continuing education interests which were physical assessment, pediatrics (preventive), disease control, pediatrics (curative), STDs, and maternal health. These data suggest an expected strong interest in areas where respondents are currently involved. Maternal and child health services comprise a large component of CPHU nursing services. Initial health promotion development efforts should supplement existing services. Once a foundation of health promotion programming has been laid, additional services can be built into that system. (See Appendix E).

CPHU Management. Six subject areas (public health law, management training, time management, funding sources, computers, and health economics) were included under this heading. Aside from public health law, there was uniformally low interest in CPHU management training. (Appendix F).

Selected Topics. Nine subject areas were included in the study as they were suggested by several CPHU employees. Of the nine, CPR and first aid aroused the most interest. With the exception of possibly CPR and first aid, the

implication for health promotion training appears limited. (See Appendix G).

Additional. Respondents were also querried regarding training interests respecting patient counseling skills and small group instruction techniques. While 64.2 percent of respondents reported counseling patients, 76.5 percent desired additional training. Insofar as small group classes were concerned, 44.6 percent of reported conducting classes, but 80.2 percent wanted additional training.

Conclusions

1. Health Education-Risk Reducation skills training was needed;
2. A training plan needed to be developed including the following:
   a. patient counseling skills
   b. small group instruction techniques
   c. diabetes education
   d. nutrition education
   e. maternal health risk reduction
   f. child abuse and
   g. interpersonal communication techniques;
3. District wide conferences should be organized concerning
   a. domestic violence and
   b. physical fitness, nutrition, and health; and
4. Health education methods training should precede other HE-RR training when possible.

IMPLEMENTATION OF A CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM

Select Regional Training Sites

Regional training sites were established in five CPHUs. Staff attempted to set-up two sites along subdistrict lines; however, this approach was impossible given competing clinic schedules. Thus, five training sites were selected. The training schedule has done much to increase CPHU nurses' access

to continuing education classes. Courses were taught once a month at each site on a rotating basis. (See Appendix H).

HELP Developed Training Courses

HELP developed six training courses designed for District 3 CPHU nurses. The Health Education Methods Course contains three, three hour units: Interpersonal Communications, Patient Education and Behavior Change, and Techniques of Small Group Instruction. (Appendix I). Three other courses were developed by HELP: Stress Management Techniques, Florida Health Risk Appraisal Training Course and Prenatal Lifestyle Educational Intervention. (Appendix J). Initially, HELP designed pre and post tests for each course; but participants did not desire to be tested. Therefore, an application exercise was built into each course and the application of learned skills was observed by the instructor (Appendix K). Course participants were also given a course evaluation form (Appendix L). Ninety-eight of 136 CPHU nurses have received health education methods training. At least one nurse from each CPHU has been trained in the use of the health risk appraisal. Five CPHUs received prenatal lifestyle educational intervention training. Fifty nurses have received stress management training.

Special Interest Courses

Four special interest courses (Diabetes Patient Physical Assessment and Compliance Issues, Nutrition Update, Identifying the Alcohol and Drug Abusing Patient and Child Abuse) were taught by guest instructors at several training sites. A total of 10 classes were taught to 101 participants.

IMPACT

Changes in attitude and the application of learned skills will be measured by re-administration of the CPHU Health Education Attitudes and Practices Survey in March 1985. An analysis of course evaluation forms would indicate positive impact upon participants (Appendix M).

APPENDIX A

Continuing Education Attitudes

Respondent Continuing Education Attitudes

Question Number	Item	Responses (%) SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{X}$
18	Educational skills are necessary to do public health work	30.1	54.8	14.0	1.1	3.1
19	Attendance at a number of continuing education sessions should be a requirement for a pay raise	6.6	36.3	39.6	17.6	2.3
20	Public health employees should attend continuing education sessions, even if they are not fully reimbursed	5.4	41.3	35.9	17.4	2.3

APPENDIX B

Health Promotion Interests

Health Promotion-Risk Reduction Topics

Subject Area		Interest(%)			
Disease/Condition	Risk Factor	Much/Very	Moderate	Some	None
Breast Cancer	BSE	22.5	27.5	28.7	21.2
Lung Cancer	Smoking	26.8	37.8	17.1	18.3
	Occupational Ill.	16.2	38.7	26.2	18.8
Cirrhosis of Liver	Alcohol Use	22.0	39.0	23.2	15.9
Heart Disease	Blood Pressure	40.2	35.4	15.9	8.5
	Body Weight	37.8	35.4	17.1	9.8
	Physical Fitness	35.4	28.4	26.8	9.8
	Nutrition	34.1	42.7	13.4	9.8
Diabetes	Diabetes Mellitus	37.0	33.3	21.0	8.6
Motor Vehicle Accidents	Illicit Drugs	30.9	34.6	19.8	14.8
	OTC Drugs	29.6	34.6	28.4	7.4
	Seat Belts	16.0	25.9	23.5	34.6
Non Motor Accid.	Accident Prevention	21.0	35.8	29.6	13.6
Stress	Coping Skills	33.3	37.0	22.2	7.4
	Disorders	32.1	42.0	18.5	7.4
	Loneliness	20.7	34.1	26.8	18.3

APPENDIX C

Cancer Detection Screening Test Interests

Interest in Cancer Detection Screening Tests

Subject Area	Interest(%)			
	Much/Very	Moderate	Some	None
Pap Smear	24.7	43.2	13.6	18.5
Leukemia Blood Test	21.0	22.2	24.7	32.1
Lung Cancer Chest X-Ray	16.0	23.5	25.9	34.6
Testes Self-Exam	9.9	24.7	28.4	37.0
Colo-Rectal Screening	8.6	29.6	29.6	32.1
Prostate Screening	6.2	23.5	27.2	43.2

APPENDIX D

Domestic Violence

Domestic Violence Interests

Subject Area	Interest(%)			
	Much/Very	Moderate	Some	None
Child Abuse	51.9	32.1	11.1	4.9
Spouse Abuse	45.7	35.8	11.1	7.4
Parenting Training	39.5	29.6	16.0	14.8

APPENDIX E

Technical Content Subjects

Technical Content Subject Interests

Subject Area	Interest(%)			
	Much/Very	Moderate	Some	None
Physical Assessment	50.6	25.9	9.9	13.6
Pediatrics (Preventive)	49.4	28.4	14.8	7.4
Disease Control	45.7	34.6	11.1	8.6
Pediatrics (Curative)	45.6	30.4	12.7	11.4
STDs	43.6	32.1	15.4	9.0
Maternal Health	43.2	37.0	8.6	11.1
TB	26.8	31.7	20.7	20.7
Rabies	20.0	30.0	26.2	23.7

APPENDIX F

CPHU Management

CPHU Management Interests

Subject Area	Interest(%)			
	Much/Very	Moderate	Some	None
Public Health Law	48.8	14.6	25.6	11.0
Mgt. Training	31.3	27.5	23.7	17.5
Time Management	30.9	25.9	14.8	28.4
Funding Sources	27.2	22.2	24.7	25.9
Computers	24.7	24.7	25.9	24.7
Health Economics	22.5	22.5	35.0	20.0

APPENDIX G

Selected Topic Areas

Selected Topic Interests

Subject Area	Interest(%)			
	Much/Very	Moderate	Some	None
CPR	39.0	29.3	14.6	17.1
First Aid	37.0	37.0	14.8	11.1
Ageing	33.3	22.2	28.4	16.0
Sexuality	33.3	33.3	21.0	12.3
Hospice	30.0	32.5	23.7	13.7
Hepatitis	28.4	34.6	22.2	14.8
Developmental Disability	22.2	39.5	27.2	11.1
Handicapped	19.5	31.7	31.7	17.1
Ecological Programs	14.8	19.8	39.5	25.9

APPENDIX H

CPHU Staff Training Schedule

Site	County Served	Time
Alachua CPHU	Alachua, Union, Bradford	3rd Wednesday
Putnam CPHU	Putnam	3rd Monday
Suwannee CPHU	Columbia, Lafayette, Hamilton, Suwannee	4th Wednesday
Dixie CPHU	Dixie, Levy, Gilchrist	4th Friday
Marion CPHU	Marion, Sumter, Lake Citrus, Hernando	2nd Thursday

Summary
Health Education Methods Course

The Health Education Methods course is divided into three units of three hours in length. A brief description of each unit is presented.

Unit Title: Interpersonal Communication Techniques

Learning Objectives:

At the conclusion of this session, the participant will:

*better understand his/her interpersonal communication style;
*understand the interpersonal communication process
*demonstrate use of active listening techniques which improve patient communication skills

Content Summary:

Participants will review the communication process, level of communication, attentive listening techniques and nonverbal behavior. Participants will practice specific techniques that will improve interpersonal communications.

Unit Title: Patient Educational Intervention & Behavior Change

Learning Objectives:

At the conclusion of this session, the participant will:

*understand the five phases of behavior change intervention;
*be able to organize information in such a manner so as to facilitate patient learning;
*acquire or refine techniques that will enhance the behavior change process

Content Summary

Participants will review the behavior change process including educational diagnosis, providing patient information, values clarification, management of the change effort and completion of the change effort. Specific health values clarification exercises will be reviewed as well as behavior change contracting and techniques to address behavior change inhibiting factors.

Unit Title: Techniques of Small Group Instruction

Learning Objectives:

At the conclusion of this session, the participant will possess enhanced small group patient education skills:

*The participant will understand the fundamentals of patient education;
*The participant will be able to organize information in such a manner so as to facilitate patient learning;
*The participant will be able to employ techniques that will facilitate learning in a small group situation;
*The participant will be able to select instructional aids so that the learning process is enhanced--
-testing
-films
-transparencies
-posters
-pamphlets

Content Summary

Participants will review the fundamentals of education, organization of the lesson plan, use of audio-visual aids, and class management techniques. Participants will construct a short lesson plan.

APPENDIX J

Stress Management Techniques

At the conclusion of this session, the participant will be better able to manage the stressors associated with the practice of public health nursing. The participant will:

*understand the physiological impact of stress;
*exercise increased skills to identify stressors associated with public health nursing; and
*be able to utilize a minimum of three stress management techniques,
1. Relaxation Response
2. Progressive Relaxation
3. Visual Imagery
4. Self Assessment.

Florida Health Risk Appraisal Training Course

At the conclusion of this session, the participant will be able to:

*administer a health risk appraisal;
*counsel a patient about health risk appraisal results;
*make appropriate referrals and behavior change contract;
*monitor patient progress and where necessary provide support and counseling; and
*evaluate their health risk reduction programming efforts.

Prenatal Lifestyle Intervention

At the conclusion of this session the participant will:

*understand the impact of prenatal patient behavior on her health;
*acquire skills that will enhance prenatal patient educational interventions; and
*apply learned skills in a case study situation in order to evaluate present or future prenatal educational intervention efforts.

APPENDIX K

CPHU Continuing Education Course
Evaluation System

Course	Comments
1. Health Education Methods	
.Interpersonal Communication Techniques	.Participants used programmed notes which were reviewed informally. Learned skills were evaluated in a role play situation by instructor observation.
.Patient Education & Behavior Change Techniques	.Participants used programmed notes which were reviewed informally. Learned skills were evaluated in a role play situation by instructor observation.
.Techniques of Small Group Instruction Techniques	.Participants used programmed notes which were reviewed informally. Learned skills were evaluated in a role play situation by instructor observation.
2. Stress Management Teqhnicues	.Participants used programmed notes which were reviewed informally. Learned skills were evaulated in a role play situation by instructor observation.
3. Florida Health Risk Appriasal Training Course	.Participants used programmed notes which were reviewed informally. Learned skills were evaluated in a role play situation by instructor observation.

Participant Course Evaluation

Date:_____

Course Title:_____

Leader's Name:_____

Evaluation: Indicate your response by blackening one circle for each question.

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	NA
1. The degree to which this program will enhance my professional skills or knowledge	0	0	0	0	0
2. The degree to which the content met the stated objectives	0	0	0	0	0
3. The degree to which the instructor(s) was effective in conveying information	0	0	0	0	0
4. The degree to which resource information provided was adequate and useful	0	0	0	0	0
5. The degree to which the entire program was meaningful and appropriate	0	0	0	0	0

Do you have any suggestions for improving the course content?

_____

Should any changes be made in the instructional aids used with this course?

_____

Please feel free to make any other comments you feel appropriate.

_____

_____

Staff Training and Development Course
Evaluation Summary
July 1, 1983-April 30, 1984

Title: Interpersonal Communication Skills

	Completely Agree (%)	Partially Agree (%)	Partially Disagree (%)	Completely Disagree (%)
Program met needs	83	17		
Gool learning environment	92	9		
Course met objectives	83	17		
Appropriate teaching methods	83	17		
Educational materials available	83	9	9	
Excellent program	75	25		

Title: Patient Educational Intervention & Behavior Change

	Completely Agree (%)	Partially Agree (%)	Partially Disagree (%)	Completely Disagree (%)
Program met needs	86	14		
Good learning environment	91	9		
Course met objectives	87	13		
Appropriate teaching methods	93	7		
Educational materials available	88	12		
Excellent program	75	25		

Title: Techniques of Small Group Instruction

	Completely Agree (%)	Partially Agree (%)	Partially Disagree (%)	Completely Disagree (%)
Program met needs	93	5	2	
Good learning environment	45	33	10	13
Course met objectives	88	12		
Appropriate teaching methods	82	18		
Educational materials available	84	11	2	2
Excellent program	80	20		

Title: Diabetes Patient Physical Assessment and Compliance Issues

	Completely Agree (%)	Partially Agree (%)	Partially Disagree (%)	Completely Disagree (%)
Program met needs	90	10		
Good learning environment	82	9	9	
Course met objectives	95	5		
Appropriate teaching methods	90	10		
Educational materials available	67	33		
Excellent program	71	29		

APPENDIX M
(continued)

Title: Identifying the Alcohol and Drug Abusing Patient

	Completely Agree (%)	Partially Agree (%)	Partially Disagree (%)	Completely Disagree (%)
Program met needs	79	21		
Good learning environment	79	14	7	
Course met objectives	79	14	7	
Appropriate teaching methods	79	21		
Educational materials available	86	14		
Excellent program	86	14		

Title: Prenatal Lifestyle Educational Intervention

	Completely Agree (%)	Partially Agree (%)	Partially Disagree (%)	Completely Disagree (%)
Program met needs	41	47	6	6
Good learning environment	53	41		6
Course met objectives	53	41		6
Appropriate teaching methods	53	41		6
Educational materials available	47	35		12
Excellent program	29	65		6

Title: Nutrition Update for General, Maternal, and Infant Needs

	Completely Agree (%)	Partially Agree (%)	Partially Disagree (%)	Completely Disagree (%)
Program met needs	62	31	7	
Good learning environment	77	23		
Course met objectives	69	31		
Appropriate teaching methods	69	31	7	
Educational materials available	85	15		
Excellent program	69	23	7	

Title: Stress Management Techniques

	Completely Agree (%)	Partially Agree (%)	Partially Disagree (%)	Completely Disagree (%)
Perception of usefulness of information	73	7	20	
Did leader encourage participation	73	17	7	
Training objectives met	80	17	7	
Appropriate exercises	77	10	7	
Leader organized	70	17	13	
Appropriate presentation	60	13	13	
Good learning environment	23	20	7	43